Saipan Tribune CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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INSIDE

Around the CNMI

CONGRATULATIONS

The Saipan Tribune family extends its heartfelt congratulations to reporter Shan Seman and his girlfriend, Rose, who recently gave birth to their daughter, Mykali. Best wishes from all of us!



CASSIE DLG FEJERAN

URBAN OUTLET +ORANGE

C/O POI

Man accuses **CHC** doctor of medical malpractice

By JOHN RAVELO

A doctor at the Commonwealth Health Center has been accused of malpractice after she allegedly advised a patient to simply take aspirin to heal a misdiagnosed ankle sprain that later turned out to be a bone fracture.

Alvin Owens also accused the CHC of negligently hiring physician Bernadette Saccamano and for continuously retaining the doctor despite her alleged incompetence.

As a result of the misdiagnosis, Owens disclosed that he had to undergo surgical operation for the removal of a portion of a bone. Had the initial diagnosis by Saccamano been correct, Owens said he would not have undergone such operation.

In a lawsuit filed with the Superior Court, Owens sought monetary damages from Saccamano and the CHC. Owens' lawyer, Michael Dotts, also impleaded as defendants a CHC radiology employee who performed X-ray on him, the hospital's supervisor, and an insurance company, whose identities have yet to be ascertained.

Dotts said Owens figured in an accident on a rented moped and injured his ankle last March 6. Owen sought treatment at the CHC's emergency room the following day. Saccamano ordered an X-ray on Owens' ankle.

"Defendant Saccamano told Mr. Owens that it was only a sprain and he should rest for a while and take aspirin, but otherwise it was okay to walk on the ankle," Dotts said.

heeded the doctor's advice mental and emotional distress and and begun walking again after loss of enjoyment of life. Owens a few days of rest. The pain also incurred medical costs.

and swelling on Owens' ankle, however, persisted.

About four weeks after Owens' visit to the CHC's emergency room, a radiology employee examined the X-ray of the patient's ankle and found out about the alleged misdiagnosis, according to Dotts, who added that the employee never notified Owens about it.

Dotts said the continuing pain and swelling prompted Owens to seek help from a second doctor from the Pacific Medical Center, a certain Dr. De Guzman, who diagnosed the patient's injury as a fracture. The doctor then referred Owens to a certain Dr. Austin, an orthopedic specialist at the CHC.

On April 30, Austin reviewed the original X-ray of Owen's ankle. "Dr. Austin explained that, if Mr. Owens had been properly diagnosed, then only a cast would have been needed," Dotts said.

"However, because of the misdiagnosis, the fracture had become displaced to the point that a surgical operation was now necessary to remedy the situation," the lawyer added.

Owens complained about the misdiagnosis to the CHC's administrator's office as early as May 7, but he has yet to receive any reply even when he filed the lawsuit Friday. Austin operated on Owens on May 12, removing a bone fragment.

"In hiring [Saccamano], CHC knew, or in the exercise of due care, should have known, that defendant was not competent to satisfactorily perform her duties as a physician," Dotts said.

Dotts said his client suffered The lawyer said his client not only physical pain but also

ADA workshop starts Monday

The American with Disabilities get the health care they need, Act workshop will start its first session on Monday, July 12, at the World Resort. This 11-day workshop will build partnercates and business and public communities.

It will help promote participation in the community for people with disabilities through education and technical assistance.

The sessions aims to ensure that people with disabilities will creating affordable housing options and support for accessible transportation services.

The sessions are provided by ship between disability advo- nationally and locally recognized experts on disability-related issues, including presenters and speakers involved in ADA—U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Access Board, Pacific Disability and Business ADA & IT Technical Assistance Center, The Arc, and the CDD ADA Technical Assistance Support.

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WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 2:25 A.M., DECEMBER 17, 2003

Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A monsoon trough extends from 6N130E through a tropical disturbance near 8N145E and finally to near 5N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the disturbance are found in the Mariana islands as well as between Yap and Chuuk or between 4N and 16N from 139E to 153E. Just east of the monsoon trough, a surface trough of low pressure continues to near the equator at 168E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are developing north and east of the trough or within 100 miles either side of a line from 9N160E to the equator at 173E, including Kosrae. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of the Marshall islands, between 4N and 16N from 170E to 180.



SAIPAN AND TINIAN

Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers. **Temperature:** Lows near 78. Highs near 86.



GUAM AND ROTA

Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some Cloudy and Dieczy with Scatters and locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.

Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers. **Temperature:** Lows near 78. Highs near 86.



Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.



POHNPEI

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Winds: East at 10 kt.



YAP AND ULITHI Partly cloudy with

isolated showers. Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.



KOSRAE

Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.



CHUUK

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers with a slight chance of thunderstorms. Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.



MAJURO

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

	CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
2	Auckland	Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
*	Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	26F (-3C)
	Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
	Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	72F (22C)
2	London, England	Cloudy	56F (13C)	45F (7C)
	Los Angeles	Cloudy	69F (21C)	51F (11C)
2	Manila	Cloudy	88F (31C)	71F (22C)
*	Melbourne	Sunny	73F (23C)	54F (12C)
	Miami	Partly Cloudy	84F (29C)	75F (24C)
2	New York, NY	Cloudy	52F (11C)	48F (9C)
1	Osaka	Rain	54F (12C)	46F (8C)
2	Paris	Cloudy	53F (12C)	41F (5C)
1	Pusan	Rain	58F (14C)	43F (6C)
	Rome	Partly Cloudy	55F (13C)	39F (4C)
1	Salem, Oregon	Rain	54F (12C)	38F (3C)
*	San Francisco	Sunny	64F (18C)	47F (5C)
1	Seoul	Rain	52F (11C)	45F (7C)
1	Tokyo	Rain	55F (13C)	49F (9C)
	Washington, DC	Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)

Opinion



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EDITORIAL	

Los Angeles Times



Letters to the Editor

Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.



8 SUNDAY, JULY 11, 2004

Our World At War

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United States

shipping liberation

ACROSS THE NATION		
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Life & Style

Life & Style

La Scala rushes to finish renovations

By FRANCES D'EMILIO AP WRITER

The seats are still missing, plaster dust coats the crimson, silkcovered walls of the spectator boxes, and sprouting from the floor like weeds are wires for screens which will be mounted for each of the 1,800 seats, allowing patrons 'o read subtitle'.

But La Scala's Thevation, which has shut down the hallowed hall since December s going better than pre-, theater officials say.

Taking foreign correspondent on tour Thursday, La Scala city officials incisted and the theater will be ready as promised for opening night Dec. 7.

They boasted that some phases of the overhaul were even running ahead of schedule.

"At the end of November, Maestro (Riccardo) Muti starts the rehearsals of `Europa Riconosciuta," the premiere night's opera, said Milan Deputy Mayor Riccardo De Corato.

Looking at the gaping, 17-

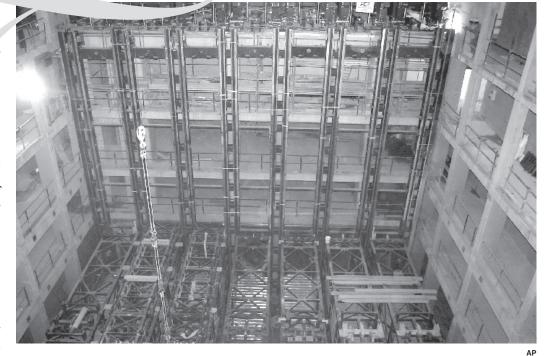
story-hig backstage space lined with the skeletons of setmoving achinery, one nee 's a giant le p of imagination -or faith—t believe the .dline will b met. But F Corato said t .t with som 30 workers aling from n to nearly r inight even iolidays, the romise will æpt.

While spoke, young women nirts worked on scaffol on the outside of six tiers of spectator $som \epsilon$ abbing gilding on decowinged lions and leafing.

La Scala's \$67 million renovation added precious storage space for sets which will allow the opera house to mount more productions and performances to meet growing demand for seats, La Scala Superintendent Carlo Fontana said.

Tryouts of some of the machinery will begin Saturday.

While preservationists went to court in a vain attempt to block the work, theater officials insisted that the renovation gave the theater back much of its rich history.



A view of the sets moving machinery of La Scala theater in Milan, Italy, Thursday, July 8, 2004.

Carpeting and linoleum were stripped away to reveal Venetian marble flooring in the corridors and terra cotta tiles in the boxes. Where marble pieces were missing, replacement stone was taken from the same quarries. Fourteen coats of plaster had hidden the original marble on interior walls.

The theater was constructed in 1778 after Maria Teresa of Austria, then Milan's ruler, decided the city needed a new theater in its heart. A church, Santa Maria della Scala, was razed to make room.

"We kept all the historical parts

in all their particulars," the project's architect, Mario Botta, said.

Untouched was the structure of the stage and the spectator section, including the intimate, horseshoe-shaped arrangement of boxes.

Fontana said he decided shortly after coming on board in 1991 that the shortage of space to store and move the sets was crimping the potential to stage more performances. "It didn't meet the public demand that was constantly rising," he said.

With such artists as Luciano Pavarotti becoming household words, La Scala is often on tourists' must-see lists.

La Scala's next season program will be announced on July 16.

After mid-January, La Scala will return until April to the Milan theater, Teatro degli Arcimboldi, that has been serving as its temporary home during the restoration. This will allow the new set machinery to be fine-tuned.

"Set machinery is like a Formula One car," Fontana said. "You test it out during a race."

Teen arrested in deaths at Donaldson ranch

BV PETE HERRERA AP WRITER

ager before his arrest.

HONDO, N.M. (AP)—A 14-year-old boy accused in a triple-murder on newsman Sam Donaldson's ranch told police he took a gun from the barn and shot his family after being repeatedly beaten by his father—including once with a shovel, according to a man who took care of the teen-

Cody Posey remained in custody Thursday in the deaths of his father Delbert Paul Posey, stepmother Tryone Posey and 14-year-old stepsister Mary Lee Schmid, whose bodies were unearthed from a shallow grave near their home on the southern New Mexico ranch.

In an exclusive interview with the Associated Press, Faustino Salcido said he was present dur-

ing questioning of Cody Posey by Lincoln County sheriff's deputies Wednesday. Salcido, whose sons are friends of young Posey, said the teen had stayed with them Monday and Tuesday—playing basketball, frolicking in the river and shooting off fireworks—but said nothing about the slayings.

"We didn't suspect nothing 'cause he was all happy. We'd never seen him like that," Salcido said Thursday at his rural home about 15 miles from the Donaldson ranch.

"Before, he was real quiet and drawn away. He'd talk to you, but he wouldn't carry on a conversation. (Monday) you couldn't keep him quiet. He told me these were the happiest two days he'd had in his life. ... He thanked me for letting him stay," Salcido said.

On Wednesday, he said, au-

thorities showed up and began asking Cody questions.

"He didn't show no emotion. He kept asking them, 'What's happening, what's happening? Why are you asking me all these questions?"

Salcido said Cody didn't break down until deputies took him away, accompanied by Salcido, for additional questioning.

"That's when he started crying, saying he knew it was wrong but that the world would be better off without them in this world. He was tired of all this abuse," he said.

Salcido said the boy told investigators that on Monday "he was cleaning the corral, and his dad didn't like the way he cleaned it, so he smacked him a couple of times and told him to go into the house."

Salcido said the boy told deputies that he went into the barn, got the family's .38-caliber pistol and went into the house.

"His mom was in there. That's the one he shot first. Then the dad and the sister came in, and he shot them too," Salcido said the boy told investigators.

Salcido told the AP that the boy also told deputies his father hit him with a shovel and tried to strangle him during the Fourth of July weekend.

A pattern of abuse was well known to his sons and to others in the community, Salcido said.

The two sons told the AP they recalled many instances when Cody Posey showed up at school with black eyes and other bruises.

Asked if sheriff's deputies had investigated abuse, Sullivan said: "I can say we did not." He said if a teacher had reported it, "we would have done something about it."

'Anchorman' takes aim at easy target

NEW YORK (AP)—Will Ferrell's title character in "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy" is faced with a serious female colleague for the first time. Diversity is the reason, he's told. But he thinks diversity is the name of an old wooden ship from the Civil War.

A San Diego anchorman in the '70s, Burgundy is the latest in a line of Hollywood anchormen dating back to Ted Baxter of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" (1970-77) who by turns are pompous, vain, vacuous, and living by the slogan: Sincerity—once you can fake that, the world is yours.

Since Baxter (the name of Burgundy's dog, by the way) we've seen Jim Dial of "Murphy Brown," Bill McNeal in "NewsRadio" and three cartoon favorites: Kent Brockman of "The Simpsons," Tom Tucker of "The Family Guy" and Morbo the alien in "Futurama."

"Saturday Night Live" has long lampooned anchors on its "Weekend Update." And "The Daily Show" has won a Peabody for its nightly sendup of newscasts.

The comic, unflattering characterization of anchormen recurs for several reasons, according to pop-culture observers and media mavens:

They're authority figures.

"Kind of like dads in sitcoms," laughed Jill Geisler, the first woman in the United States to become the news director of a major-market network affiliate.

"It's why very seldom principals of schools or deans of universities are presented in a good way," said Syracuse University's Robert Thompson, citing Dean Wormer in "Animal House" as a classic example.

□ Journalists rate lower than even lawyers in surveys of the public's esteem.

Interestingly, however, a survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press shows consumers regularly turn to local news more than their local paper, network news—or any other source. In "Anchorman," the bumbling Burgundy is a viewer favorite.

□ People are generally more cynical.

"It is harder today to do a serious, sincere story of an anchorperson than it is to do a comedy. Could you imagine trying to pull off 'Lou Grant' today, for example, without people laughing in your face?" said Thompson, who runs Syracuse's Center for the Study of Popular Television.

"The 'journalist against the world, out to do the right thing, fighting the right fight' seems so naive to so many people that it ends up sounding square."

The last earnest attempt, the NBC series "Deadline" starring Oliver Platt, was quickly canceled after its 2000 debut.

Dave Tolchinsky, an associate professor of radio-TV-film at Northwestern University, thinks viewers are often wondering about the sincerity of the anchor's emotions on camera.

Kerry-Edwards fundraiser brings in \$7.5M

NEW YORK (AP)—Celebrities gathered Thursday night to raise \$7.5 million for John Kerry and John Edwards-or "kid" as Whoopi Goldberg called the newest addition to the Democratic presidential ticket.

The comedian greeted Kerry and Teresa Heinz Kerry, and then peered into the crowd looking for Edwards and his wife, Elizabeth Edwards. "And where's the kid? Where's young Mr. Edwards? And, where's my girl, where's my girl? Stand up miss girl."

Teasing Kerry, Goldberg said: "Not that your not youth-

ful. You're very youthful John. But he's youthful. He looks like he's 18!"

Later she offered the Kerry-Edwards ticket a little advice: "John and John. Kid and John. Tell the truth, be honest, don't be afraid. Not everyone's going to like it."

The running mates, on their first campaign swing together since Kerry picked Edwards as his vice presidential hopeful on Tuesday, attended the Democratic bash at the famed Radio City Music Hall in midtown Manhattan.

Taking the stage at the end

of the evening, Edwards said: "Whoopi Goldberg said earlier tonight that she was afraid she wasn't going to get a phone call to be here." Then, he added the punch line: "I can relate to that."

Then, Kerry joined in: "John Edwards thinks he was worried he wasn't going to get a phone call. I was worried I wasn't going to get anybody at home!"

Ticket prices for the evening started at \$250 for the concert alone to \$25,000 for the concert and a reception, including the celebrities. The show was sold out with 5,500, though

not every donor attended.

The money raised from Thursday's concert will be divided between Kerry's campaign and the Democratic National Committee. Last month, a similar concert in Los Angeles raised \$5 million, padding Kerry's coffers and helping him break fund-raising records.

Musician Jon Bon Jovi, who held a \$1 million fund raiser for Kerry at his Middletown, N.J., home last month and has been an outspoken backer of Kerry, performed acoustic versions of two of his hits before officially opening Thursday's event.

Love reportedly hospitalized, misses court

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Troubled rock star Courtney Love got a bench warrant for her 40th birthday after failing to appear Friday at her arraignment on an assault charge. Her lawyer said she was in the hospital in New York City.

"It is not a suicide attempt, not drug-related, not drug-overdose related," attorney Michael Rosenstein said. "It's a gynecological medical condition for which she is receiving treatment.

"This is all third-hand, I have not spoken with her since last night, when she complained of medical problems, had not seen doctor and as a result the situation was exacerbated.'

Earlier, Rosenstein had told a Los Angeles court Love was in New York City and confused about whether she was required to be in Los Angeles.

Court Commissioner Dennis E. Mulcahy said there was no excuse for her failure to appear. He said she forfeited her \$55,000 bail and he set a new bail of \$150,000.

Love, former lead singer of the band Hole, has coast-tocoast legal troubles and has had to reschedule a summer

himself in to jail

ATLANTA (AP)—R&B singer

Bobby Brown must turn himself

in to jail officials by Sunday on

charges he hit his wife, singer

A judge had ordered in May

there was enough evidence for

Brown to stand trial on misde-

meanor battery charges for alleg-

edly striking Houston in the face

at their home near Alpharetta. The judge told Brown he must

turn himself in by Sunday for

fingerprinting, and he then would

If he does not appear at the jail,

a bench warrant could be issued

for his arrest, said senior court

clerk Lanny Lipsky. But he cau-

tioned he's not sure what action

Simple battery is punishable

by up to a year in jail and a

\$1,000 fine. Normally on a first

offense in domestic-violence

cases, the charge is dismissed

if the defendant undergoes

receive paperwork until Brown,

35, turns himself in, so no trial

a year before it comes up,"

date had been set Friday.

State court officials will not

"It could be as far down as

Houston called police Dec. 7

to report that Brown threatened

to beat her "and then struck the

left side of her face with an open

right hand," a Fulton County

In an interview with "Dateline NBC," Brown called the incident a "little spat." He said

the two were playfully "slap

boxing" and Houston took one

of his jabs a "little serious."

counseling.

Lipsky said.

police report said.

officials would decide to take.

be released on \$2,000 bail.

Whitney Houston.



Courtney Love, shown in this May 25, 2004, file photo in Superior Court in Los Angeles, got a bench warrant for her 40th birthday when she failed to appear in court Friday, July 9, 2004, for arraignment on an assault charge.

tour to support her new album, "America's Sweetheart."

She was scolded by a judge last month when she showed up more ment for allegedly hitting a fan

than five hours late to a Manhattan court for a hearing on charges of assault and reckless endangerwith a microphone stand in the East Village in March. She's due back there Sept. 7.

Love was supposed to have been arraigned in Los Angeles on a charge of assault with a deadly weapon for allegedly attacking a 32-year-old woman with a liquor bottle.

The charge involves an April 25 incident at the home of former manager and ex-boyfriend Jim Barber.

Love, widow of Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain, also was charged in two cases stemming from encounters with police on one night last October.

Authorities said cocaine and other opiates were found in Love's system after she was arrested for allegedly trying to break into Barber's home. She pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor drug charge and agreed to enter a drug rehabilitation program.

She is also facing a felony case in Beverly Hills Superior Court for alleged illegal possession of prescription painkillers. Love allegedly gave officers a small bag of pills after they responded to a call from her home hours after her initial October arrest.

Marlon Brando leaves \$21.6M estate Brown told to turn

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Marlon Brando has 10 living children and his \$21.6 million estate includes his Beverly Hills home, according to his will filed Friday in Superior Court.

Brando's assets included \$18.6 million in real estate and \$3 million in personal property, according to the will, which does not specify how the estate will be split.

The iconic Oscar-winning

age 80 on July 1.

Brando said in the will that he was not married.

His living children are identified in the will as Christian, 46; Miko, 43; Teihotu, 41; Rebecca Brando Kotlinzky, 38; Petra Brando-Corval, 32; Maimiti, 28; Raiatua, 23; Nina Priscilla, 15; Myles Jonathan, 12; and Timothy Gahan, 10.

He identified his former maid, Maria Christina Ruiz, as the mothactor died of lung failure at er of his three youngest children.

She was appointed their guardian. Ruiz filed a \$100 million breachof-contract suit against Brando but settled out of court.

Petra Brando-Corval was adopted and is not a beneficiary of the will. She was the child of Brando's former personal assistant, Caroline Barrett, who sued the actor after a dispute over a \$185,000 loan. Another daughter, Cheyenne, committed suicide in 1995.

Oprah Winfrey gives \$1 million to museum

CINCINNATI (AP)—Oprah secret Underground Railroad Winfrey has given \$1 million to the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and North during the 1800s. is narrator of an educational film for the museum, its administrators said.

The \$110 million museum, being built along the Ohio River, commemorates the program. A reconstructed

network that helped slaves escape from the South to the free

Winfrey, whose donation was announced Thursday, will narrate a short film introducing "Brothers of the Borderland," a film and interactive theater slave holding pen also will be part of the museum.

Celebrity supporters of the museum, many of whom are expected to participate in the center's dedication ceremonies Aug. 23, include Vanessa Williams, Angela Bassett, Muhammad Ali, Quincy Jones, Bono and Danny Glover.

Visit to Thailand leaves mark on Angelina Jolie

A brief visit to Thailand has gelina Jolie.



Hollywood movie star Angelina Jolie has a tattoo of a tiger engraved on her back by renowned Thai tattoo artist Sompong Kanphai.

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)— left an indelible mark on An- After a two-day visit to Cambodia, the 29-year-old actress stopped in Bangkok Wednesday to have a tiger tattooed on her lower back by a well-known local artist, The Nation newspaper reported Friday.

> Jolie spent more than two hours at a hotel having the 12-inch-long image applied by renowned tattooist Sompong Kanphai, the newspaper said.

> Last year, Sompong applied an image featuring ancient Cambodian script, designed to ward off bad luck, on her back.

> Jolie reportedly said she decided to get the new tattoo because the first one made her feel that her life is filled with luck.

Depression strikes teen at same time each year

By AVIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I am an 11th-grade girl who should be an all-around happy teenager, but lately I've been depressed. Ever since seventh grade, I've gotten depressed at the same time every year.

The first time it happened there were many reasons for it. Around that time, you published a list of signs that point to depression. I fit all of them except onethoughts of suicide. Your list made me realize I needed help, and I got it.



For a while I was doing great. But now, every year I get this recurrence. My mood gets low and I have no energy. My grades drop. I feel worthless and cry easily.

Is there a reason why this happens, and is there anything I can do about it? (I live in an area where there is little climate change year-round.) Also, could you please publish the signs of depression again? It helped me immensely, and may help others, too. ANONYMOUS TEEN

DEAR ANONYMOUS TEEN: I'm certainly willing to publish them again, but before I do, allow me to direct some remarks to you. The fact that your depression recurs each year is not unusual, I am told. However, it is important that you tell your doctor about it. You should also discuss it with your family. Because depression often runs in families, you may be surprised to discover you are not alone.

My experts tell me that regardless of age, anyone who experiences any five of the following symptoms for two weeks or more should consult a mental health professional:

- (1) Fatigue or loss of energy.
- (2) Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed.
- (3) Feelings of sadness and/or irritability.
- (4) Inability to concentrate, remember things or make decisions.
- (5) Changes in sleep patterns.
- (6) Changes in weight and appetite.
- (7) Restlessness or decreased activity noticed by others.
- (8) Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless.
- (9) Thoughts of death or suicide.

DEAR ABBY: I received a card from my husband's aunt, "Millie." With it, she enclosed a check. Millie and I have never met, but her note was warm and friendly. I wrote back and thanked her.

A few months later, we received another lovely card from Millie with another check enclosed. I'm sending her a thankyou note today, but I'm not sure how to decline future checks. As I understand it, Millie and her husband are elderly and not well-to-do. Although I appreciate their love and concern for our growing family, I feel uncomfortable accepting monetary gifts from them.

I don't want to appear rude or ungrateful. I would love to continue corresponding with Millie, but I don't want her to feel she has to pay for it. What should I say?

CHECKS ALWAYS IN THE MAIL

DEAR CHECKS: Thank generous Aunt Millie for her thoughtfulness. Tell her that you are enjoying the opportunity of getting to know her, then deposit the money in the bank. Use it to buy her something lovely at Christmas or something for the children. If you decide to spend it on the children, let her know what you bought for them from their "great" Aunt Millie. It will help them to feel closer to her.

P.S.: Be sure they write thank-you notes to her.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a businesssized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby-Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)















Rudy Tomjanovich agrees to coach Lakers



Houston Rockets head coach Rudy Tomjanovich calls out to his players in the first quarter against the Minnesota Timberwolves in Minneapolis, in this Feb. 17, 1999 photo.

AP SPORTS WRITER



LOSANGELES (AP)—Rudy Tomjanovich, who guided the Houston Rockets to NBA championships in 1994 and 1995, agreed Friday to coach the Los Angeles Lakers.

"We expect that he'll sign a contract and we'll hold a press conference tomorrow to announce it," team spokesman John Black said.

In a move expected since Monday, Tomjanovich succeeds Phil Jackson, who coached the Lakers to three titles in five years. The team announced June 18, three days after losing to the Detroit Pistons in the NBA Finals, that Jackson wouldn't return next season.

55-year-old Tomjanovich coached the Rockets for 12 years before stepping down in May 2003 - two months after being diagnosed with bladder cancer. He negotiated a settlement of the remaining two years and \$12 million left on his contract.

Reportedly in good health now, he worked as a scout with the Rockets last season—his 34th year with the organization he joined in 1970 as the second overall selection in the NBA draft.

Tomjanovich was the winningest coach in Rockets history with a 503-397 record, but they failed to make the playoffs in his last four years there.

He joins an unsettled Lakers team-Kobe Bryant is an unrestricted free agent and Shaquille O'Neal has demanded a trade. Derek Fisher and Karl Malone are also unrestricted free agents.

Tomjanovich, one of the first candidates interviewed, had to wait as the Lakers discussed the job with Miami Heat president Pat Riley, Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski and North Carolina coach Roy Williams.

Riley, a winner of 1,110 games in 21 seasons—the first nine with the Lakers—said he spoke with Lakers officials but wasn't offered the position.

An offer was reportedly made last week to Krzyzewski, who announced Monday he was staying at Duke. Williams told the Lakers last month he wasn't interested in the job.

It was only a matter of time for Tomjanovich to be hired after Krzyzewski announced his decision. General manager Mitch Kupchak said Tuesday the Lakers had "identified the guy we want to hire" and that Tomjanovich "would be a wonderful selection" if hired.

It's believed Tomjanovich agreed to terms of a five-year contract worth about \$30 million—a deal similar to the one Jackson signed in June 1999.

Black wouldn't comment on con-

Tomjanovich becomes the fourth coach in NBA history to coach one team to multiple championships before being hired by another, joining Bill Russell, Riley and Jackson.

Tomjanovich survived one of the scariest moments in NBA history on Dec. 9, 1977, at The Forum in nearby Inglewood when Lakers forward Kermit Washington blindsided him with a devastating punch that sent him crashing to the floor with several shattered facial bones.

Doctors later said the injuries were life-threatening, but Tomjanovich returned the following season wearing a protective mask and made one of his five appearances in the NBA All-Star game.

Tomjanovich later filed a civil suit against the Lakers and the two sides eventually agreed to a \$2 million settlement. Tomjanovich was awarded \$3.25 million by a jury, but the settlement was reached before an appeal was heard.

The Lakers have reportedly stepped up efforts to trade O'Neal, who has insisted he won't play for them again. A possible destination could be Miami.

Quoting sources, the Riverside Press-Enterprise reported Thursday the Lak-

ers were considering a deal that would include Lamar Odom, Brian Grant and a first-round Miami draft pick. Caron Butler's name has also been mentioned. Black refused to comment.

Bryant has met with representatives of the Lakers, Clippers, Denver Nuggets and New York Knicks this week and reportedly could make a decision as soon as this weekend. Free agents can sign contracts beginning July 14.

Calls to the representatives for Bryant and O'Neal weren't returned.

Bryant, O'Neal and Fisher all joined the Lakers in 1996.

"Derek and Rudy are going to talk and learn a lot more about each other," said Fisher's agent, Mark Bartelstein. "Rudy has a great reputation as a coach, his record speaks for itself. Derek is going to talk with Rudy and we'll see where it goes from there."

Malone's agent, Dwight Manley, said his client believes Tomjanovich "is a great coach."

However, Tomjanovich's presence might not be enough convince Malone to return to the Lakers if the NBA's second-leading career scorer decides to play next season.

"Karl's got his own timeline to decide things," Manley said. "He's not deciding what he's doing yet, if he's playing or where he's playing. First, he'll decide if he will, then he'll decide where he will. That probably won't happen for a little while.'

Malone said following the NBA Finals he would only return if he was 100 percent healthy and only with the Lakers. He had minor knee surgery last month and came through in good shape.

"He did always talk about coming back to the Lakers exclusively-what was unsaid but implied was the Lakers were going to be the same team he signed with last summer," Manley said.

With Jackson gone and the futures of Bryant, O'Neal and Fisher uncertain, that obviously won't be the case.

Armstrong ends behind Tour de France leader



(AP)—Lance Armstrong recovered from an early fall

and avoided a late crash, finishing in a pack behind stage winner and former teammate Tom Boonen of Belgium in the Tour de France on Friday.

Armstrong, trying for a record sixth straight Tour title, was thrown from his bike but not hurt in a crash involving a number of cyclists about 20 minutes into the sixth stage, a 122-mile run from Bonneval to Angers.

Armstrong and rival Jan Ullrich of T-Mobile managed to stay clear of a major wreck near the finish that involved all but about 30 riders.

According to the rules, competitors held up in a crash in the final kilometer of a stage are given the same time as the winner.

Boonen and a pack of riders, including Armstrong and Ullrich, finished the stage in 4 hours, 33 minutes, 41 seconds. Ullrich was 26th, and Armstrong 34th.

Thomas Voeckler of France retained the overall leader's yellow jersey and was 9 minutes, 35 seconds ahead of the sixth-place Armstrong. Ullrich is another 55 seconds back.

Armstrong quickly got back in the

ANGERS, France race after the early fall and, with help from his U.S. Postal Service teammates, caught up with the pack

> "It was a typical early race crash," he said. "There's nothing you can do. You hit the brakes, but bikes don't stop that fast, so I just went over."

Armstrong said he was not seriously hurt.

"It wasn't bad, a little bit on the arm, a little bit on the hip," he said. The five-time champion also criti-

cized organizers for the narrow layout of the final stretch into the finish.

"Coming in, they've got the barriers really tight, and you've got 200 guys racing through there at 40 mph. ... You're going to have crashes," Arm-

strong said.

Boonen won a sprint finish, speeding past Cofidis' Stuart O'Grady of Australia and T-Mobile rider Erik Zabel of Germany, hoisting his arms into air as

he crossed the line. "It was really a great win," said Boonen, who is riding in his first Tour. "I love this kind of sprint-hard-for really strong sprinters."

Australian sprinter Robbie McEwen of Lotto Domo got caught in the crash and rode slowly to the finish line with a huge hole in his racing

shorts after sliding along the tarmac.

The spill was the first of this Tour for Armstrong and came a day after the 32-year-old Texan said he was worried about crashing. Adverse conditions marred much of the first week, although weather for Friday's stage was balmy by comparison and mostly rain-free.

"In this race, I'm always scared, always nervous," he said. "The last two or three days for me, personally, have been really, really nerve-racking.

"It's a stressful race."

Viatceslav Ekimov of Russia, Armstrong's trusted teammate who usually steers him through crashes and other hazards, arrived last and battered at Postal's bus, a thin stream of blood running down his right leg.

Five Postal riders were among the top 10 in the overall standings after the stage.

American Tyler Hamilton, a former teammate of Armstrong who now rides for Phonak, blew a tire. He caught up with the main group near the 36-mile mark and finished 102st in the stage. He is 13th overall.

The fast-paced sixth stage took place without two of cycling's fastest sprinters-Italians Mario Cipollini and Alessandro Petacchi, who pulled out of the race before the start due to injury.



Overall leader Thomas Voeckler of France, wearing the yellow jersey, center, pedals through Bauge during the 6th stage of the Tour de France cycling race between Bonneval and Angers, western France, Friday, July 9, 2004.

Phelps wins 200 freestyle at swim trials

By PAUL NEWBERRY

LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP)—Michael Phelps vs. the Thorpedo. Two of the world's best swimmers going head-tohead at the Olympics. Pretty appealing, huh?

Phelps set up a potential Athens showdown with Ian Thorpe by winning the 200-meter freestyle at the U.S. Olympic trials Friday—clearly the most intriguing part of the quest to break Mark Spitz's record of seven gold medals.

"I love to race the best," said Phelps, who also would have to contend with Dutch star Pieter van den Hoogenband, an upset winner over Thorpe at the Sydney Olympics. "It definitely would be a little appealing."

Natalie Coughlin, the most heralded U.S. woman in the pool, finally made her first Olympic team by winning the 100 backstroke. On the men's side, friendly rivals Aaron Peirsol and Lenny Krayzelburg



Michael Phelps, right, is congratulated by Scott Goldblatt after the Men's 200 Meter Freetyle final at the U.S. Olympic swim trials in Long Beach, Calif., Friday, July 9, 2004.

went 1-2 in the 100 back.

Also Friday, Amanda Beard made her third straight Olympic team over a formidable field in the 100 breaststroke. She held off four-time NCAA champion Tara Kirk and three other former Olympians.

Phelps entered six individual events at the American trials with an eye toward breaking Spitz's record from the 1972 Munich Games. Just 42 minutes after his victory in the 200 free,

win his heat in the semifinals of the 200 butterfly.

The 19-year-old from Baltimore also hopes to swim on all three relay teams in Athens, giving him up to nine events to chase down Spitz.

The 200 free would be Phelps' only individual race against Thorpe, who has basically become a freestyle specialist. It also presents the longest odds of winning gold, which is why the American phenom didn't rule out the possibility of withdrawing if he feels the event would interfere with his other races.

Phelps holds three world records (200 butterfly, 200 and 400 individual medley) and the second-fastest times ever in the 100 fly and 200 back. As for the 200 free, that's ruled by Thorpe.

He has turned in eight of the top nine times in history, including the world record of 1 minute, 44.06 seconds. Phelps holds the American record, nearly 2 seconds slower at 1:45.99.

"We're going to see how

whose winning time Friday was 1:46.27.

Then again, van den Hoogenband showed in Sydney that Thorpe is not invincible. Phelps would clearly relish a chance to knock off the Aussie star in one of his best events.

"He's been extremely dominant over the last four years," Phelps said.

Knowing he had another race to go, Phelps didn't push too hard in the 200 free. Also, he was hurt by a poor start—diving into the water slower than any of the other seven finalists.

the (starting) block off," Phelps said. "It's something to pay more attention to in the future."

Added his coach, Bob Bowman: "It was a real slow start, and that cost him the American record."

But Phelps caught early leader Nate Dusing midway through the third leg, then held off Klete Keller at the finish.

"He just never gets rattled," Bowman said.

Keller, who already had made the team by winning the 400 free, claimed another spot by taking second at 1:46.87.

Phillies rally to edge Braves, 7-6



pinch-hit, RBI single in the 10th inning Friday helped the Philadelphia Phillies overcome a five-run deficit and two threerun homers by Rafael Furcal to beat Atlanta 7-6 in 10 innings.

Chase Utley hit a solo homer off John Smoltz with one out in the ninth to tie it at 6 and Mike Lieberthal had four RBIs, including a three-run homer in the eighth.

"It's great to come back and win the game, especially against one of the best closers," Perez said.

Cardinals 6, Cubs 1

In St. Louis, Jason Marquis kept Chicago reeling while St. Louis got home runs from Edgar Renteria, Albert Pujols, Jim Edmonds and Tony Womack.

Greg Maddux (7-7) gave up three of the homers as the Cardinals won their ninth in a row at home, including the first seven games of a nine-game homestand

Mets 6, Marlins 3

In Miami, Ty Wigginton homered and had an RBI double, and Mike Cameron also homered for New York, which scored four runs in the eighth inning to beat Florida and win for the seventh time in nine games.

South Korea's Hee Seop Choi hit a two run homer against his former high school teammate Jae Seo.

Pirates 11, Expos 0

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, Jason Bay homered twice as Pittsburgh to score a season-high nine times in the second inning to back Sean Burnett's first career shutout and trounce Montreal.

Burnett (3-2) scattered 10

none, helping to shut out Montreal for the 13th time this season. It was Pittsburgh's fourth shutout.

Reds 3, Brewers 0

In Milwaukee, Aaron Harang tied his career high with 10 strikeouts and Wily Mo Pena homered as Cincinnati shut out Milwaukee.

Since spending most of June on the disabled list with a sprained ligament in his right elbow, Harang (5-2) has allowed just one earned run in 18 2-3 innings.

Astros 3, Dodgers 2

In Los Angeles, Andy Pettitte outpitched former teammate Jeff Weaver and also drove in a run, and Jose Vizcaino hit a tiebreaking RBI single in the eighth inning to lead Houston past Los Angeles.

Carlos Beltran hit his fifth homer in 14 games with the Astros, who ended Los Angeles' six-game winning streak. Beltran left the game because of a stiff right knee in the eighth.

Rockies 6, Padres 5

In San Diego, pinch-hitter Mark Sweeney hit a tiebreaking tworun homer off Trevor Hoffman in the ninth inning to give Colorado a win over San Diego.

The Rockies, who have won seven of eight, trailed 4-3 entering the ninth before Larry Walker led off with a full-count walk against Hoffman (2-1), who blew his third save.

Giants 8, Diamondbacks 3

In San Francisco, Edgardo Alfonzo made Randy Johnson pay for not pitching to Barry Bonds as San Francisco trounced Arizona.

Moments after

PHILADEL - hits, struck out three and walked matched his major league record for intentional walks, Luis Gonzalez dropped Alfonzo's bases-loaded liner to left field for an error that allowed the goahead runs to score.

Yankees 5, **Devil Rays 4**

In New York, Paul Quantrill and Mariano Rivera made sure the Yankees held off Tampa Bay for the second straight night.

Quantrill relieved Javier Vazquez (10-5) with a two-ball count and the bases loaded in the sixth inning and escaped the jam, and New York beat the Devil Rays.

Rivera gave up a run in the ninth, then retired Rocco Baldelli on a foul popup with the bases loaded to end it.

Indians 5, **Athletics 4**

In Cleveland, pinch-hitter Lou Merloni's two-run single capped Cleveland's three-run ninth inning off Octavio Dotel to beat Oakland.

Merloni ripped the first pitch from Dotel (1-1) down the leftfield line with the bases loaded to score Omar Vizquel and Travis Hafner before being mobbed by his teammates.

Angels 5, Blue Jays 4

In Toronto, Bartolo Colon pitched seven strong innings for his second win in his last 11 starts, and Vladimir Guerrero drove in three runs as Anaheim edged Toronto.

Colon (6-8) entered with the highest ERA among American League starters at 6.57. The 31year-old right-hander, who signed a four-year, \$51 million contract during the offseason, allowed four runs—three earned—on five hits and lowered his ERA to 6.38.

White Sox 6. **Mariners 2**

In Chicago, Carlos Lee homered twice and drove in five runs, and Jon Garland (7-5) pitched seven solid innings to help Chicago down Seattle.

The Mariners have lost a season-high seven straight games. At 32-52, Seattle is 20 games below .500 for the first time since Aug. 5, 1994. They've also lost 10 straight on the road.

Red Sox 7, Rangers 0

In Boston, Johnny Damon went 4-for-5 with two homers and four RBIs and Bronson Arroyo allowed three hits in eight innings for his first win since May 15 as Boston beat Texas.

Boston won its fourth straight, its longest streak since winning five in a row May 21-26. Damon extended his hitting streak to 14 games with a firstinning single.

Royals 7, Orioles 0

In Baltimore, Mike Sweeney ended Kansas City's clubrecord streak of 32 scoreless innings with a two-run double in the sixth as the Royals beat baltimore to snap an eightgame skid.

Darrell May (6-9) pitched a five-hitter for his third career shutout, just 11 days after yielding seven runs and eight hits in a 10-1 loss to Baltimore.

Tigers 5, Twins 3

In Minneapolis, Jason Smith hit two of Detroit's three homers to help the Tigers beat the Minnesota.

Carlos Guillen hit a three-run homer in the first inning, and Gary Knotts (5-3) held the Twins to two runs over 62-3 innings for his first win in five starts.

MLB STANDINGS

36 47 .434 16 1-2

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

AMERICAN LEAGUE **East Division**

W L Pct GB New York 53 31 .631 47 37 .560 6 Boston Tampa Bay 42 43 .494 11 1-2 39 47 .453 15

Central Division

Minnesota	47	38	.553	_
Chicago	44	38	.537	1 1-2
Cleveland	41	44	.482	6
Detroit	40	45	.471	7
Kanege City	30	53	361	16

West Division

	•••			
Texas	48	36	.571	_
Oakland	46	38	.548	2
Anaheim	45	40	.529	3 1-2
Seattle	32	52	.381	16

Yesterday's Games

Boston 7, Texas 0 Anaheim 5, Toronto 4 Kansas City 7, Baltimore 0 Cleveland 5, Oakland 4 Chicago White Sox 6, Seattle 2 N.Y. Yankees 5, Tampa Bay 4 Detroit 5, Minnesota 3

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division Philadelphia 46 39 .541 New York 44 41 .518 2 43 42 .506 3 Atlanta 43 43 .500 3 1/2 Florida

29 56 .341 17

Central Division

Montreal

Central Division				
St. Louis	53	32	.624	_
Chicago	46	39	.541	7
Cincinnati	46	40	.535	7 1/
Milwaukee	44	40	.524	8 1/
Houston	44	42	.512	9 1/
Pittehurah	30	15	464	13 1

west Divisio	nc			
Los Angeles	46	38	.548	_
San Francisco	47	40	.540	1/2
San Diego	46	40	.535	1
Colorado	35	50	.412	11 1/
Arizona	31	56	356	16.17

Yesterday's Games

N.Y. Mets 6, Florida 3 Philadelphia 7, Atlanta 6, 10 in-

St. Louis 6, Chicago Cubs 1 Cincinnati 3, Milwaukee 0 Houston 3, Los Angeles 2 Colorado 6, San Diego 5 San Francisco 8, Arizona 3

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

BOSTON RED SOX-Placed LHP Lenny DiNardo on the 15-day DL, retroactive to July 5. Purchased the contract of RHP Joe Nelson from Pawtucket of the IL. Designated LHP Tim Hamulack for assignment. CLEVELAND INDIANS-Signed OF Alfred Ard.

OAKLAND ATHLETICS-Placed INF Esteban German on the 15-day DL, retroactive to July 4. Activated 3B Eric Chavez from the 15-day DL. FLORIDA MARLINS-Agreed to terms with LHP Taylor Tankersley. **MILWAUKEE** BREWERS-Optioned RHP Wes Obermueller to Indianapolis of the IL. Purchased the contract of INF Matt Erickson from Indianapolis.

MONTREAL EXPOS-Agreed to terms with RHP Collin Balester and assigned him to the Expos of the Gulf Coast League.

CHARLOTTE BOBCATS-Named Jeff Capel assistant coach. LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Agreed to terms with Rudy Tomjanovich,

MINNESOTA TIMBERWOLVES-Named Jim Stack general man-

PHOENIX SUNS-Signed F-C Jackson Vroman.

WNBA

NEW YORK LIBERTY-Signed F La'Keshia Frett to a seven-day

College

AKRON-Named Reed Case director of football operations. AUBURN-Named Matt Myers pitching coach.

BRADLEY-Named Scott Petersen women's tennis coach.

BUCKNELL-Named Heather Rakosik softball coach. BUTLER-Named Jason Underwood defensive line coach.

CHARLESTON-Named Franklin men's assistant basketball MICHIGAN STATE-Named Al

Brown women's assistant basketball coach. NORTH DAKOTA-Named Dave

Hakstol men's hockey coach. OHIO STATE-Named Thad Matta men's basketball coach. SETON HALL-Signed Phyllis Man-

gina, women's basketball coach, to a multiyear contract extension. STEPHEN F. AUSTIN-Named Taqueta Roberson and Krissy Riggs women's assistant basketball

TENNESSEE TECH-Named Marty Steward linebackers coach and John Chandler running backs coach.

TEXAS A&M-CORPUS CHRISTI-Signed Jodi Kest, women's basketball coach, to a one-year contract extension. Promoted women's assistant basketball coach, Robert Robinson, to women's associate head basketball coach. Named Deb Roof women's assistant basketball coach.

TEXAS-PAN AMERICAN-Named Brian Dolan men's assistant basketball coach.

CAROLINA-Named WESTERN Steven Herren assistant athletic director for external relations. YOUNGSTOWN STATE-Named

Mike Babul men's assistant basketball coach

By The Associated Press

The Week in Sports

Net sports dominate week

By MARK RABAGO

REPORTER

asketball and tennis dominated the headlines this past week.

The CNMI's top men and women players flew to Guam to compete in the fifth staging of the Microne-

sian Basketball Tournament.

After a win against Chuuk in their debut, the men have gone on a downward spiral losing to Marshall Islands and Kosrae its next two outings to drop off from the medal race.

The women, so far, have been more fortunate. After four games, the team has a record of 2-2, alternating losses and wins against Palau, Chuuk, Guam, and Pohnpei heading into Friday's rematch with Palau.

In local basketball, pool play of the 2004 UFO-San Miguel Cup continued

at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last weekend, while 2004 Inter-Restaurant Basketball League resumed play at the Ada Gym Wednesday morning.

In tennis, the Century Insurance Co. Tennis Classic continued to chug along at the American Memorial Park tennis courts with vaunted netters Faheem Ebrahim, Tim Quan, Mayuko Arriola, Joy Minor, Buddy Garote, and Richard Asuncion contesting the championships.

In baseball, the Saipan All-Stars got a ticket to Guam for the Asia-Pacific Regional Tournament after topping Tinian in the championship last July 3.

Last Wednesday, the Miller Lite Brewers finally completed the championship cast after sweeping the Pirates, 8-7, in Game 2 of their playoff series at the Francisco M. Palacios baseball field. They will face the Northern Yankees for all the marbles this week.



Best player Randy Arnedo receives his EC Communications gift certificate from UFO-San Miguel Cup chairman Ramon Awit.

MARK RABAGO

John Jugos of El Segundo skies high for a layup in the third quarter of his team's loss to

Angel Wings.



Richard Tan of Angel Wings drives to the basket in his team's 58-54 win over El Segundo Wednesday morning in the 2004 Inter-Restaurant Basketball League.

James Villacrusis tried in vain to rally SIP-Verizon in the game against Cabalen-RP Construction Sunday in the 2004 UFO-San Miguel Cup. Cabalen won 97-79

MARK RABAGO



Martin Pangelinan, left, and Josh Arriola take a break from practice for an interview and to ham it up for the camera.



MARK RABAGO

Men's 4.0 doubles competitors, from left, Dodong Espanola, Dr. Bert Ventura, Edwin Maratas, and Jorge Olanda.

FILATA former president Roel Payumo in action against Gary Ramsey in the CIC Tennis Classic.

MARK RABAGO



BRAD E. RUSZALA
The Pirates demonstrate the true spirit of

sportsmanship as they congratulate the Brewers on their victory in the playoffs and wish them luck against the Yankees in the championship.

CRAGON

Future stars of the CNMI have visions of becoming champions someday as they gaze into the trophy case at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.









28 SUNDAY, JULY 11, 2004

Tomjanovich agrees to coach Lakers

Rudy Tomjanovich, who guided the Houston Rockets to NBA championships in 1994 and 1995, agreed Friday to coach the Los Angeles Lakers.

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Net sports dominate week

Basketball and tennis dominated the headlines this past week.



27

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Sakovich revisits old stomping grounds

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO REPORTER

ess than a month after saying adieu, Saipan Swim Club founder Bill Sakovich found himself back on the islands' warm embrace in late July when he helped organize the 2nd Annual Escape from Managaha Island.

Okay it might not have been as warm a welcome as the now Hilo, Hawaii resident would've hoped for—what with Typhoon Tingting lashing out her fury on the Marianas—but for Sakovich it was still great to be back home.

Sakovich said since packing up his bags and leaving Saipan last May 30, he has been quite busy serving as consultant for the International Olympic Committee.

His first stop was Kosrae in the Federated States of Micronesia and then he moved on to the Marshall Islands—initially in Majuro and then on Kwajelein.

Sakovich said he tried to help jumpstart a national sports body in Kosrae. He said he hopes the island would pattern it after the Commonwealth's Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association.

"They have some organized sports on the island but nothing near any organizational body to tie them



Sakovich with Guam National Olympic Committee's Rick Blas.

all together. We basically had to get the leaders of each sport to come and meet to chart Kosrae's sports program," he said.

Going around the island, Sakovich noted that basketball, tennis, and track and field were the favorite sports. He also said that Kosrae's local government is planning to build a track and field facility sometime in the near future.

The two-week trip to Kosrae funded by the IOC and FSM's National Olympic Committee ended



Sakovich with Escape from Managaha Island women's runner-up Mieko Motoyoshi, and Marianas Visitors Authority's Martin Duenas, and a PDI staffer.

with Sakovich and the island's sports leaders coming up with a sports calendar for the rest of the year.

He said he expects to come back to Kosrae in eight months time to update IOC and the FSM-NOC on the progress of his efforts.

In Majuro, Sakovich said he saw a sports program a little better than that of Kosrae but still years behind that of the CNMI.

He said the leaders of the Marshall Islands are scrambling their resources to get a tentative okay to join the Olympic movement, which they finally expect to get during the Athens Games. With the approval, Marshallese athletes could participate in the next Olympics in Beijing.

During his stay in Majuro, he together with Rick Blas of the Guam NOC tried to reinforce the idea of setting up a stronger national sports association for the Marshall Islands.

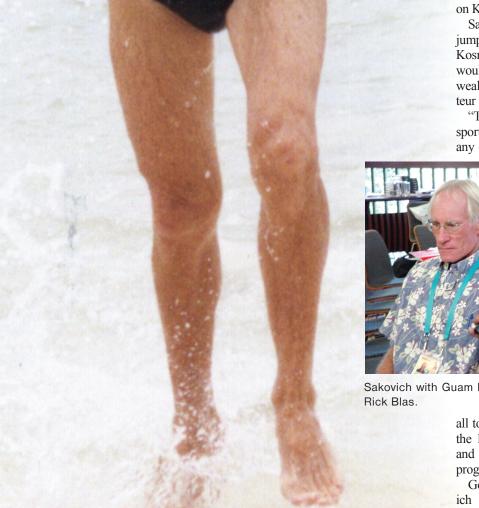
Sakovich said swimming seems to be a very popular sport in Kwajeilin, site of the islands' only swimming pool, while basketball, softball and baseball are widely played throughout the rest of the isles. Returning to Saipan four days before the July 11 Escape, Sakovich said he missed the island despite being away by only a few weeks. He said during the short time he left, he has already seen the strides made by his successor Michael Stewart in the SSC.

"Mike has done a terrific job. Not only are the kids buying into his program, they have also dropped their times and are getting better. I always was in the impression that Saipan is really lucky to get someone in the caliber of Mike to takeover from me. He will only make the SSC better," he said.

Coming back to his old stomping grounds also allowed Sakovich to touch base with old friends and update them on he and his wife Jean's move to Hilo. In fact, he said they are starting to get back into the groove of things and even participated in an open water swim recently, with Bill finishing third and Jean fifth in their age groups.

Sakovich said he expects to be back on Saipan before the end of the year.

For some people, you could never really stay away from home even if you've left it.



Bill Sakovich emerges

Saipan Ocean Swim.

from the surf in last year's